

service. He pointed out that, in consideration of population and education, his community deserved a larger share of Government appointments. Taking the Secretariat first, he said that none of the seven secretaries was an Indian Christian. There was no objection to appoint Christians as Tahsildars in the localities where there was no Devaswom to be managed. The Member then enumerated the number of appointments held by the Christians in the subordinate ranks of the various departments and said that his figures were only approximate. There was no Christian among the taluk samprathies, or in the Kandukrishi Department or among the headmasters of higher grade secondary schools. He said that 2 out of the 35 Deputy Tahsildars, 5 out of the taluk treasurers, 4 out of the 357 taluk clerks, one out of the 557 proverty accountants, alone were Christians. In the other departments the number of Christians was comparatively small and could be very much more than what it was. Now that the heads of departments had been empowered to fill up appointments up to Rs. 40, appointments were made without regard to the interests of the Christian subjects. If the Government would call for a list of the employees in the various departments, they would see the necessity for redressing the grievances of the Christians. The Member therefore requested that the Government might be pleased to call for statistics and issue the necessary instructions to the heads of departments to employ the Christians to a greater extent in the subordinate ranks of the service.

The Member next referred to the necessity for throwing open the Caste Hindu Hostel to the Christian students who suffered for want of accommodation. The L. M. S. Hostel at Trivandrum, which used to provide all the Christian students with accommodation, now admitted only those of their denomination. All that was immediately necessary was the opening of an additional kitchen in the present hostel.

He then pointed out the necessity for constructing separate kitchens in the satroms that had been thrown open to the Christians.

He also pointed out the difficulty experienced by the Christians in the matter of elections for the Assembly membership and said that the system of giving votes only to persons paying a Sirkar tax of Rs. 50 and above worked great hardships upon the Christians. The amount became less and less as the families became divided and thus the several members of the Christian families lost their right of voting. That was not the case with the Nairs. So, in the interests of the Christians, the sum of Rs. 50 fixed as the qualification for a voter should be reduced, or a greater number of Christians should be nominated as members in localities largely inhabited by the members of that community. Similarly, in the case of the membership in the Legislative Council, a separate electorate or nomination by the Government was the only means by which the Christians could secure seats in the Council. There were no elections held hitherto, but only in one of them was a Christian elected, though members from the community did stand for election. Judging from the result of the current year's election, it was certain that members from any other community than the Nairs had little or no chance of getting into the Council by election. He therefore prayed that a separate electorate should be created for the Christians or the number of Indian Christians in the Council should be fixed and that number secured by Government nomination.

*Dewan's reply.*—Noted.

#### 166. Appointments in the State service.

*Mr. Abraham Isaac* (Member, Nominated) said that the condition of education among the Pulaya converts to Christianity was very poor. Their economic difficulty was the chief cause of that state of affairs. They were consequently unable to continue the education of a boy until he acquired any examination qualification. He therefore requested that, as an incentive to the spread of education among them, a few qualified persons be given suitable appointments in the State service, and that the unqualified youths be more freely entertained in the subordinate ranks where no examination qualification was necessary.

He particularly mentioned the case of one C. J. Rebecca of Vijayapuram, who had to discontinue her studies after Form III on account of poverty, and requested that she be given a scholarship to study midwifery.

In conclusion, the Member pointed out the difficulties experienced by the people of his community in passing through certain public roads in Central and North Travancore and prayed that the Government might be pleased to take the necessary action in the matter.

*Deewan's reply.*—Noted.

**167. Desirability of modifying the rules regarding the election of Members to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.**

*Mr. N. Kumaran, B. A. & B. L.* (Member, Nominated) said that the object of the Government in granting the privilege of electing the taluk members to the people was to get at the representatives of the people. That object was not fully attained by the present method of election. The members now elected represented the majority and the minorities were still left unrepresented. Very few possessed the minimum property qualification. Further, the existing rules gave scope only for the land-owning classes. Those who contributed to the revenue by indirect taxation had no means of representation. That the principle of election was unsound was further evidenced by the fact that only one Ezhava had as yet come in by election during 11 years, even though the community formed about a sixth of the population of the State. The other grievances of the community were being steadily removed by the Government, but no action was taken on the representations of the Ezhava members regarding the modification of the Assembly Rules. The difficulties arose from the unsympathetic attitude of the communities who had a majority. The Government themselves were convinced of the justice of the demand for a better representation of some of the important communities and the system of nomination was therefore resorted to. But the Member argued that there were several objections to the system of nomination. In the first place, the nominated members were not the representatives of the people, who were not consulted in making the nominations, and therefore they did not voice public opinion. In the second place, nomination was an act of grace on the part of the Government, and the people could not demand it as of right. He pointed out that, in British India, similar difficulties were avoided by granting special electorates. There was no objection to such a system of special electorates being granted to the minorities in Travancore also.

The Member then suggested the following changes in the existing Assembly Rules, with a view to admit more voters from the minorities:—

- (1) The property qualification for a voter should be reduced from the payment of a minimum tax of Rs. 50 to Rs. 25 per annum.
- (2) The annual income to qualify one to become a voter should be reduced from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 500.
- (3) Every graduate of a recognised University should be eligible to vote, and the restriction that he should have a standing of ten years should be removed.

*Mr. P. Madhavan Vaidyan* (Member, Nominated) said that the necessity for modifying the rules for the election of members to the Assembly was pressed on the attention of the Government by him at the last session but nothing was done in that direction. He now considered that even the reduction of the qualification of a voter in the payment of Sirkar tax from Rs. 50 to Rs. 25 would not benefit his community. He therefore suggested that special electorates might be sanctioned for them.

The Member next said that the question of appointing Ezhava members in all the Town Improvement Committees should engage the attention of Government. In those towns, where the privilege of electing the non-official members had been given to the rate-payers of the town, the Ezhava had no chance of becoming a member. He requested that the Government should continue to nominate Ezhava members to those Committees for some time to come. The tax paid to the Committee by the Ezhavas living in a town should not be the basis of nominating Ezhavas to the Committee as in that case he feared that the chances would be limited. The general status of the Ezhavas among the subjects of the State should alone be made the